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Edward J. Kuebert

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FINNEGAN, HENDERSON, FARABOW, GARRETT & DUNNER
LLP

901 NEW YORK AVENUE, NW
WASHINGTON, DC 20001-4413

EXAMINER

JABR, FADEY S

ART UNIT

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3628

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PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 09/976,039	Applicant(s) KUEBERT ET AL.	
	Examiner FADEY S. JABR	Art Unit 3628	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 21 February 2008.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-30 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-30 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Status of Claims

Claims **1-30** remain pending and are therefore presented for examination.

Response to Arguments

1. Applicant's arguments filed 21 February 2008 have been fully considered and are persuasive.
2. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims **1-30** have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

3. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

4. Claims **1-2** and **11** are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Foladare et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,831,860, hereinafter referred to as Foladare.

As per **Claims 1-2 and 11**, Foladare discloses a method and system comprising:

- determining a first delivery point of the item (C. 3, lines 26-43; C. 5, lines 3-23);
- notifying, based on the first delivery point, a recipient that the item is en route (C. 3, lines 26-43; C. 5, lines 3-23);

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- accepting at least one instruction designating a second delivery point (C. 3, lines 26-43; C. 5, lines 3-23); and
- delivering the item to the second delivery point (C. 3, lines 26-43; C. 5, lines 3-23).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

5. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

6. Claim **3, 5 and 12** is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Foladare in view of Franco, U.S. Patent No. 7,257,552 B1 and Roberts et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,401,078 B1, hereinafter referred to as Franco and Roberts, respectively.

As per **Claim 3**, Foladare fails to *explicitly* disclose notifying a *sender* of the item; and allowing the *sender* to specify that the item is to be delivered to the second delivery point. Foladare discloses notifying recipients and allowing recipients to choose to redirect packages (C. 3, lines 26-43; C. 5, lines 3-23). Moreover, Franco teaches notifying a sender (C. 63, lines 1-7). Further, Roberts teaches redirection of the vehicle and/or portions of the load en route may be desirable to respond to customers (shippers) needs or other factors (C. 13, lines 27-30).

The secondary references show that the need for notifying senders and allowing senders to specify the item to be redirected to another address was known in the prior art at the time of the invention.

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Since each individual element and its function are shown in the prior art, albeit shown in separate references, the difference between the claimed subject matter and the prior art rests not on any individual element or function but in the very combination itself—that is in the substitution of the shipping system of the secondary references for the shipping system of Foladare reference. Thus, the simple substitution of one known element for another producing a predictable results renders the claim obvious.

As per **Claims 5 and 12**, Foladare discloses a method and system comprising:

- determining a first delivery point of the item (C. 3, lines 26-43; C. 5, lines 3-23);
- notifying, based on the first delivery point, a recipient that the item is en route (C. 3, lines 26-43; C. 5, lines 3-23);
- accepting at least one instruction designating a second delivery point (C. 3, lines 26-43; C. 5, lines 3-23); and
- delivering the item to the second delivery point (C. 3, lines 26-43; C. 5, lines 3-23).

Foladare fails to *explicitly* disclose notifying a *sender* of the item; and allowing the *sender* to specify that the item is to be delivered to the second delivery point. Foladare discloses notifying recipients and allowing recipients to choose to redirect packages (C. 3, lines 26-43; C. 5, lines 3-23). Moreover, Franco teaches notifying a sender (C. 63, lines 1-7). Further, Roberts teaches redirection of the vehicle and/or portions of the load en route may be desirable to respond to customers (shippers) needs or other factors (C. 13, lines 27-30).

The secondary references show that the need for notifying senders and allowing senders to specify the item to be redirected to another address was known in the prior art at the time of the invention.

Since each individual element and its function are shown in the prior art, albeit shown in separate references, the difference between the claimed subject matter and the prior art rests not on any individual element or function but in the very combination itself-that is in the substitution of the shipping system of the secondary references for the shipping system of Foladare reference. Thus, the simple substitution of one known element for another producing a predictable results renders the claim obvious.

7. Claim 4 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Foladare in view of Franco and Lopez, Pub. No. US2002/0029202 A1, hereinafter referred to as Lopez.

As per **Claim 4**, Foladare fails to *explicitly* disclose notifying the *sender*, if actual delivery is made; and requesting disposition instructions from the sender, if delivery was not made. However, Franco notifying the sender upon receipt of the parcel by the recipient (C. 63, lines 1-7). Further, Lopez teaches notifying the sender that the mailpiece has been forwarded (0013). Moreover, Lopez teaches when an item is undeliverable to either forward the address to the recipient's forwarding address, otherwise return the item to the sender (0035, 0040).

The secondary references show that the need for notifying senders and allowing senders to specify the item to be redirected to another address when the item is undeliverable was known in the prior art at the time of the invention.

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Since each individual element and its function are shown in the prior art, albeit shown in separate references, the difference between the claimed subject matter and the prior art rests not on any individual element or function but in the very combination itself-that is in the substitution of the shipping system of the secondary references for the shipping system of Foladare reference. Thus, the simple substitution of one known element for another producing a predictable results renders the claim obvious.

8. Claims **6-10** and **13** are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Foladare in view of Lopez.

As per **Claims 6-7 and 13**, Foladare discloses a method and system comprising:

- changing a delivery point of the item while the item is en route (C. 3, lines 26-43; C. 5, lines 3-23);

Foladare fails to *explicitly* disclose notifying the *sender* that the item is undeliverable, accepting a disposition instruction from the sender; and handling the item according to the disposition instruction. However, Lopez teaches notifying the sender that the mailpiece has been forwarded (0013). Further, Lopez teaches when an item is undeliverable to either forward the address to the recipient's forwarding address, otherwise return the item to the sender (0035, 0040).

The secondary references show that the need for notifying senders and allowing senders to specify the item to be redirected to another address when the item is undeliverable was known in the prior art at the time of the invention.

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Since each individual element and its function are shown in the prior art, albeit shown in separate references, the difference between the claimed subject matter and the prior art rests not on any individual element or function but in the very combination itself-that is in the substitution of the shipping system of the secondary references for the shipping system of Foladare reference. Thus, the simple substitution of one known element for another producing a predictable results renders the claim obvious.

As per **Claims 8-10**, Foladare fails to disclose disposition instructions are to auction, donate or dispose of the item. However, Lopez discloses instructions for when the mailpiece is undeliverable, i.e. forwarding the mailpiece or returning the mailpiece to the sender (0035).

The secondary reference show that the need for receiving instructions from a sender when an item is undeliverable was known in the prior art at the time of the invention.

Since each individual element and its function are shown in the prior art, albeit shown in separate references, the difference between the claimed subject matter and the prior art rests not on any individual element or function but in the very combination itself-that is in the substitution of the shipping system of the secondary references for the shipping system of Foladare reference. Thus, the simple substitution of one known element for another producing a predictable results renders the claim obvious.

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9. Claims **14, 19, 28** and **30** are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Foladare in view of Barta et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,634,551 B2, hereinafter referred to as Barta.

As per **Claims 14, 19, 28 and 30**, Foladare discloses a method and system comprising:

- determining a first delivery point of the item (C. 3, lines 26-43; C. 5, lines 3-23);
- providing a notification to indicate that the item is en route to the first delivery point (C. 3, lines 26-43; C. 5, lines 3-23);
- accepting a second delivery point of the item (C. 3, lines 26-43; C. 5, lines 3-23); and
- delivering the item to the first delivery point and second delivery point based on the acceptance of the second delivery point (C. 3, lines 26-43; C. 5, lines 3-23).

Foladare fails to *explicitly* disclose *conditionally* accepting a second delivery point. However, Barta teaches providing delivery notices to recipients of packages where an alternate address for the package can be provided given that the recipient is authenticated using the delivery notice information (C. 6, line 67 – C. 7, line 38).

The secondary reference shows that the need for authenticating a user was known in the prior art at the time of the invention.

Since each individual element and its function are shown in the prior art, albeit shown in separate references, the difference between the claimed subject matter and the prior art rests not on any individual element or function but in the very combination itself—that is in the substitution of the shipping system of the secondary references for the shipping system of Foladare reference. Thus, the simple substitution of one known element for another producing a predictable results renders the claim obvious.

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10. Claim **15** is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Foladare in view of Barta as applied to claim 14 above, and further in view of Franco.

As per **Claims 15**, Foladare fails to disclose providing information to indicate that the item was delivered to the one of the first delivery point and second delivery point. However, Franco teaches notifying the sender upon receipt of the parcel (C. 63, lines 1-7).

The secondary reference show that the need for notifying a sender when an item is delivered was known in the prior art at the time of the invention.

Since each individual element and its function are shown in the prior art, albeit shown in separate references, the difference between the claimed subject matter and the prior art rests not on any individual element or function but in the very combination itself-that is in the substitution of the shipping system of the secondary references for the shipping system of Foladare reference. Thus, the simple substitution of one known element for another producing a predictable results renders the claim obvious.

11. Claim **16-18, 20** and **29** are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Foladare in view of Barta as applied to claim 14 above, and further in view of Lopez.

As per **Claim 16-18**, Foladare fails to *explicitly* disclose providing information to indicate that the item was not delivered, when the first delivery point and second delivery point are undeliverable. Foladare discloses a system which contacts the addressee and asks if the package should be redirected, and, if so, what should be the new address (C. 3, lines 31-40).

Moreover, Lopez teaches notifying the sender that the mailpiece has been forwarded (0013). Further, Lopez teaches when an item is undeliverable to either forward the address to the recipient's forwarding address, otherwise return the item to the sender (0035, 0040).

The references show that the need for notifying senders and allowing senders to specify the item to be redirected to another address when the item is undeliverable was known in the prior art at the time of the invention.

Since each individual element and its function are shown in the prior art, albeit shown in separate references, the difference between the claimed subject matter and the prior art rests not on any individual element or function but in the very combination itself-that is in the substitution of the shipping system of the secondary references for the shipping system of Foladare reference. Thus, the simple substitution of one known element for another producing a predictable results renders the claim obvious.

As per **Claims 20 and 29**, Foladare fails to disclose requesting, from the sender, an approval of the second delivery point. However, Lopez teaches a return-to-sender determiner responsive to the sender return address indicator (0040). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of applicant's invention to modify the method and system of Foladare and include returning the mailpiece to the sender when the sender indicates return-to-sender service as taught by Lopez, because it allows the sender to be notified of the current status of the recipient's address when sending future mailpieces.

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12. Claims **21-25** are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Foladare in view of Barta as applied to claim 14 above, and further in view of Kadaba, U.S. Patent No. 6,539,360 B1, hereinafter referred to as Kadaba.

As per **Claims 21-25**, Foladare fails to disclose characteristics of the item comprises determining a size of the item. Moreover, Kadaba teaches a package level detail notification transmitted to the carrier, or consignor or consignee which includes tracking number, item description, package weight, rate codes, special handling requirements and other pertinent information (C. 7, lines 3-15). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of applicant's invention to modify the method and system of Foladare and include determining various common package characteristics and transmitting them as taught by Kadaba, because it allows the system to provide the recipient with various common characteristics.

13. Claims **26-27** are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Foladare in view of Barta as applied to claim 14 above, and further in view of Jones, Pub. No. US2003/0233190 A1, hereinafter referred to as Jones.

As per **Claims 26-27**, Foladare fails to disclose wherein providing the notification to indicate the item is en route to the first delivery point comprises providing information to indicate a time the item will arrive at the first delivery point. However, Jones teaches informing a user when the delivery vehicle is a particular time away from their residence,

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and also allowing the recipient to enter the amount of time to be notified of the package delivery (0008, 0095). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of applicant's invention to modify the method and system of Foladare and include informing the recipient of the time the mailpiece will arrive as taught by Jones, because it allows a recipient to adjust his/her schedule and avoid arrive too early or too late.

Conclusion

Examiner's Note: Examiner has cited particular columns and line numbers in the references as applied to the claims below for the convenience of the applicant. Although the specified citations are representative of the teachings in the art and are applied to the specific limitations within the individual claim, other passages and figures may apply as well. It is respectfully requested that the applicant, in preparing the responses, fully consider the references in entirety as potentially teaching all or part of the claimed invention, as well as the context of the passage as taught by the prior art or disclosed by the examiner.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to FADEY S. JABR whose telephone number is (571)272-1516.

The examiner can normally be reached on Mon. - Fri. 8:00am to 5:30pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, John Hayes can be reached on (571) 272-6708. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

Fadey S Jabr
Examiner
Art Unit 3628

FSJ

Please address mail to be delivered by the United States Postal Service (USPS) as follows:

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Hand delivered responses should be brought to the Customer Service Window, Randolph Building, 401 Dulany Street, Alexandria, VA 22314

/F. S. J./
Examiner, Art Unit 3628

/JOHN W HAYES/
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 3628